I had many talks at random, especially with Thierens. He 181
is willing to work, but says it is only toward a dim future. The police official (Aru Pontjeng) and his son (Aru Matjege, head of the local government) especially, see that things are not good. Everything is inefficient and childish. I met the former one day, and at once he asked my impression. I dodged his question and he said at least everyone eats here. I said yes, but many were slaves. He was shocked, but saw my point. I will talk with him again. I told Thierens that questions, especially of the kampong folk and even of Andi and the Sulewatang, showed that the people were ripe for economic education. They are puzzled. And they take to such talk. Thierens said that they get scared, and agreed that they go on governmental business trips in order to get away from problems. The truth 423
is, it is too poor a land. Then too, it is feudal. Thierens told 566
me a secret. I had seen private fish ponds belonging to the Arumpone in Palette, near the sea. He told me that near that place entire kampongs are working in the service of the arumpone. It is quite medieval. But perhaps the only way to operate this place is to keep serfs and slaves. At least they eat. But what hope is there for a rise of standards? For example, 653
I asked how they built roads and schools. Andi said heeren- 434
dienst [literally 'master's service']. I then said that if that were true, how would they pay for the increasing number of teachers. For that they would need money too. I said that they had rice, maize, and men--and that is all. The answer I do not know. As Thierens said, for the past forty years they have 185
grown more and more used to Western administration. Now, 434
they must keep things up to Western standards of speed and efficiency. They have neither, but they do have even grander ideas than the Dutch gave them concerning the future. They try to reach outward to a level of speed approximating that which the Dutch represented, and so forth. Instead they become dizzy. They are desperate. And even with the help of the Dutch (and Pontjeng said right away that they co-operate with the Dutch), how can they pay the Dutch and give them enough security inducement unless they have the money. In all, it is a non-paying daerah, and my guess is that the whole of East Indonesia is a non-paying negara. The only way out seems to be to get Java and Sumatra, and perhaps, in part, Borneo, to pay the bills; or to slip into a peasant economy and drop all ideas of grandeur and of a great and prosperous future with schools, etc.

Tomorrow, August 30, 1949, I am leaving for Makassar. 000